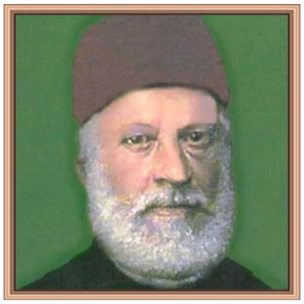


Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq
Biography and Achievements
(1801-1887)

Introduction

Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq was one of the basic pillars of the Arab Renaissance in the Modern Era, and among those behind the well-established principles that the latter was founded on. He was the “first revolutionary of the Arabic rhetoric and he spearheaded his reformations wherever his wanderings placed him”[1]. He had a universal personality and an encyclopedic mind. He was the “Jāḥiẓ of his times,” the “Voltaire of his generation,” and the “Khalīl of the nineteenth century”[2]. He was the first Arab literary figure to put out a translated autobiography, entitled *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq*, in which he rose to the level of international literary giants[3].

He was the “wanderer” of his times; he traveled to many countries where he earned a prestigious status that very few writers of his time had earned. He lived long and bordered on ninety, and he nearly witnessed the entirety of the nineteenth century. In addition to that, he was among the “striving writers: he fought and struggled, he supervised and strove for the sake of freedom of opinion and thought, creed and speech”[4]. Marūn ʿAbbūd did not err when he labeled him “Lebanon’s Eagle”[5].

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[1] Ṣawāyā, Mikhāʾīl, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Ḥayātuh - ʾAthāruh,* Dar ash-Sahrq al-Jadīd, first edition, 1962, page 11.

[2] Dāghir, Yūsuf Asʿad, *Maṣāḍir ad-Dirāsah al-Adabiyyah,* Part II, *al-Fikr al-ʿArabī al-Ḥadīth fi Siyar Aʿmālih, al-Rāḥilūn*, (1800-1955), Lebanese University Publications, Literary Studies Department, 7, Beirut, page 457. “Khalīl” mentioned above is in reference to Al-Khalīl bin Aḥmād al-Farahidī the one who laid out prosody and the author of “Kitāb al-ʿAyn” dictionary. What is meant by this comparison is that the prominent Ash-Shidyāq mastered the Arabic language.

[3] It is enough to refer, within this context, to Saint Augustine’s *Confessions,* and Imam Abī Ḥāmid al-Ghazẓali’s *al-Munqiẓ min al-Ḍalāl (Savior from Aberration),* Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Confessions,* and Alfred de Musset’s *Iʿirafat Fatā al-ʿAṣr* (*The Confession of a Child of the Century).*

[4] Dāghir, Yūsuf Asʿad, *Maṣāḍir Ad-Dirāsah al-Adabiyyah,* Part II, *al-Fikr al-ʿArabī al-Ḥadīth fī Siyar Aʿlāmih, al-Rāḥilūn*, al-ʿArabī al-Ḥadīth fī Siyar Aʿlānih al-Rāḥilūn (1800-1955), op. cit., page 457.

[5] *Sakhr Lubnān (Lebanon’s Eagle)* is the book put forward by Marūn ʿAbbūd about Ash-Shidyāq, and we will be referring to it again.

The Problematic of his Biography

A substantial part of Ash-Shidyāq's biography is obscured with mystery and conflicting sources; and not much can benefit us from tracing it in his writings, since some of it is lost, another is still handwritten, and the printed ones have run out of old editions. Furthermore, most of his writings "were deliberately eclipsed by censorship, banning, and even prohibition," and this was "mainly due to his criticism of religion, morals, and his bold approach to issues on women and sex, along with his radical political and social thought"[1]. In his autobiography *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq*, he blends the autobiographical genre with that of narrative. In addition to that, the book only covers the period of his life that ends sometime near 1851, during which he had not written, and, in that same book, he does not make a connection between the real events of his life and the dates during which they had occurred.

His Ancestry

Ash-Shidyāq is of noble descent; he belongs to "some of the lieutenants who had, for a long time, control over some of the Levant's outskirts in the 17th century, (Lieutenant Khāṭir al-Ḥaṣrūnī al-Mārūnī)"[2]. Marūn ʿAbbūd describes the ancestral line precisely and links it to Lieutenant "Raʿd Bin Khāṭir al-Ḥaṣrūnī al-Mārūnī who took over Bsharrī's front in the 17th century"[3]. Furthermore, Mikhāʾīl Ṣawāyā, quoting from Bishop Yūsuf al-Dibis' History, stretches the ancestral line much farther than that, and links Fāris Ash-Shidyāq's ancestry to Prince John, from the Maradah princes, the Maronites' prince who was killed in Qabb Ilyās, Biqāʿ, the murder was plotted by Justinian al-Akhram, the son of the Roman Prince Constantine al-Lehyani"[4]. A relative of his, closer to our time, is Fāris bin Yūsuf bin Jaʿfar, the brother of Buṭrus, labeled as Ash-Shidyāq[5]. The latter was the guardian of Prince Milḥim, the son of Prince

[1] Trābulsī, Fawwāz, al-ʿAẓama, ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* Riad al-Rayiss for Books and Publications, first edition, October 1995, page 9.

[2] Al-Ashtar, ʿAbdel Karīm, "Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq", from *Nuṣūṣ Mukhṭarah min al-Adab al-ʿArabi al-Ḥadīth (Chosen Texts of Modern Arabic Literature),* prose 1, *Aʿlām al-Rūwwad*; al-Maktabah al-Ḥadīthah (The Modern Library), Damascus, 1966, page 159.

[3] ʿAbbūd, Marūn, *Saqr Lubnān, Bāḥith fī an-Nahḍah al-Adabiyyah al-Ḥadīthah wa Rajulihā al-Awal Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq. (Lebanon's Eagle, A Research on the Modern Literary Renaissance and its First Man Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq),* Dar al-Makshūf, Beirut, Lebanon, first edition, 1950, p. 89-90.

[4] Ṣawāyā, Mikhāʾīl, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Hayatihi-Athārih (Life- Influences),* op. cit., page 17, footnote 1, and Ṣawāyā does not exactly specify the name of 'Tārīkh al-Dibis' ('the History of Dibis'), whom he quotes, nor the page numbers where it was mentioned. It seems that he takes his information from the biography of Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq written by Būlus Masʿad, and mentions this information Masʿad Masʿad in it, based on Dibis' history 'Safar al-Akhbar.' (Check footnote 1 on pages 15-16 from Masʿad's biography), and we will refer to this biography in a number of upcoming footnotes.

[5] "Ash-Shidyāqiyya" is a clerical in the Maronite Church. This rank is the third in order– after the *psalmist* and the *reader* – and is followed but by the fourth rank: deacon, which is the last before priesthood. He mentions in *Mūḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ* that "Ash-Shidyāq, for some Christians, is the one who practices the services of the priest and who chants psalms with him during prayer. The inflection of Deacons in Greek is the plural

Ḥaydar ash-Shahābī who shared his father's rule in 1730, then he ruled afterwards from 1732-1753. For financial reasons, the prince was angered by him and confiscated his properties – which resulted in suicide – and the properties of Manṣūr, the son of his brother Jaʿfar in ʿAshqūt, so he left the frowned upon Ash-Shidyāq line and headed to "Al-Buṭum region in al-Ḥadath, Beirut between 1739 and 1741". The original family name was Al-Mashrūqī before it was given the Ash-Shidyāq label; and the Shidyāq is "Fahid Bin Ash-Shidyāq Shahīn al-Mashrūqū who was the grandfather of the family". His mother was the daughter of Yūsuf Ziyādah Masʿad, the aunt of the well-known patriarch Būlus Massʿad. She married Yūsuf Ash-Shidyāq, who was born sometime between 1762 and 1763, and "known as Hajj Yūsuf because he had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem", and labeled as "Yūsuf al-Ḥasan or al-Ḥusayn out of endearment", he was her second husband after she had been the widow of her first husband ʿAbbās Abī Ḥaydar Ash-Shidyāq, and she was given the label of Imm Ḥusayn (the mother of Ḥusayn) based on her husband's label[1].

Place and Time of Birth

Fāris was born in the Butum quarter in al-Ḥadath, Beirut, in 1801. There are, however some contradictions, among researchers, around that time and place. Būlus Masʿad, the author of his biography, specifies the year to be 1805 and not 1804 "as many have claimed to be the wrong" date of birth – and ʿAshqūt, one of Kisirwān's villages – as a place of birth[2]. Marūn ʿAbbūd agrees that is the date of birth and ʿAshqūt the place, and that Ḥadath, Beirut was the place where he spent his early childhood[3]. Asad Rustum also agrees with Marūn ʿAbbūd[4] on the date and time of birth. Many others also agreed on that, such as Yūsuf Asʿad Dāghir, who had marked Fāris' birth date with a question mark[5], and Fawwāz Ṭrābulsī and Azīz al-Aẓmah in their

form of Ash-Shidyāq" (Al-Bustānī, Būtrus Buṭrus, *Mūḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ, Qamūs Muṭawwal lil-Lughah al-ʿArabiyyah (an Extended Dictionary of the Arabic Language),* Librairie du Liban, Beirut, new edition, 1978, reprinted 1998, page 456.) Then "Ash-Shidyāqa" became a noble label, used for the educated and writers, and they used to wear the "Ghunbāz" and attach a quill onto their belt to boast.

[1] Masʿad, Būlus, *Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* al-Ikha` printing press, Egypt. The printing was funded by Dr. Philip al-Shidyāq, 1934, (pp. 9-10), and Patriarch Būlus Masʿad was born in 1806, and he took over the Maronite Patriarchate from 1854 until his death in 1889. Masʿad mentions that the marriage of Aḥmād Fāris' father took place in 1794 (page 9), however, he mentions that his eldest son Ṭānyūs was born in 1791 (page 11), and if these two dates are correct, Ṭānyūs would be Aḥmād Fāris' illegitimate brother, but this was not mentioned. It remains to be speculated that Masʿad was caught in overlapping dates which he had not paid close attention to.

[2] Masʿad, Būlus, *Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p. 16.

[3] ʿAbbūd, Marūn, *Saqr Lubnān, (Lebanon's Eagle),* op. cit., p. 90.

[4] Rustum, Asad, "Khaṣāʾis al-Lughah al-ʿArabiyya" (The Characteristics of the Arabic Language), in *Lubnān fi ʿAhd al-Mutaṣarrifiyah (Lebanon during the Reglement Organique Era),* Beirut, Annahar Printing Press, 1973, p. 274.

[5] Dāghir, Yūsuf Asʿad, "Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, 1804? – 1887," in *Maṣāḍir al-Dirāsah al-Adabiyyah,* Second Vol., *al-Fikr al-ʿArabī al-Ḥadīth fi Siyar Aʿlāmih, ar-Rāḥilūn ,(Sources of Literary Studies,* Second Vol., *The Modern Arab Thought in the Biographies of its*

writings on Ash-Shidyāq[1]. Others mention however, on the margin placed on the same page of the book (page 12), the disagreements over the place and date of birth, whereby they blame the falsity on ʿImād aṣ-Ṣulḥ's claim that 1805 is the date of birth. As for Mikhāʾīl Ṣawāyā, he is certain that 1805 is the correct date, and ʿAshqūt the place[2]. Along Ṣawāyā's lines, ʿAbdel Karīm al-Ashtar, adamantly believed that 1805 is the date of birth[3]. And so did Shaykh Nasīb Wahībah al-Khāzīn in his introduction to the book *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq fi ma Huwa al-Fāryāq (Leg over Leg)[4]*. It was only ʿImād aṣ-Ṣulḥ who was able to prove the exact date and place of Ash-Shidyāq's birth in a convincing manner which was based on two letters "written by Ash-Shidyāq himself that detail the situation and shed new light on the case"[5]. We add, to what aṣ-Ṣulḥ had proven, what Marūn ʿAbbūd had mentioned – based on an issue of the contemporary newspaper "Lisān al-Ḥal" – from Ash-Shidyāq's obituary that the Havas Agency had included in a telegram dated September 22, 1887, that he passed away at "age of 88"[6], which rules out completely the claim that the date of birth was 1804, or even 1805, and it makes 1801 the most probable date. In addition to that, Ash-Shidyāq had himself mentioned, in a letter he sent "around three weeks before his death" to a legal administration officer of the Ottoman State, in which he requested financial aid, that he was 86-years-old[7]. Furthermore, his cousin Shaykh Charles Camille Ash-Shidyāq also added that his elder cousin was born in 1801[8].

Ḥadath and ʿAshqūt

It is certain that Ash-Shidyāq's parents had to move back and forth between al-Ḥadath and ʿAshqūt. They first resided in al-Ḥadath, but they moved to ʿAshqūt in 1805, based on "Prince Ḥasan ʿUmar ʿUmar Shihāb's demand" for the father Yūsuf to "reside in Kisirwān after hiring

Contemporaries, The Deceased.) (1800-1955), (Sources of Literary Studies, second Vol., the Modern Arabic Thought during) op. cit., pp. 457-458.

[1] Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and Al-Aẓmah, ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p. 12.

[2] Ṣawāyā, Mikhāʾīl, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Ḥayātuh - ʾAthāruh (His Life - His Iinfluences)*. Op. cit., p. 16, footnote 1.

[3] Al-Ashtar, Abdel Karim, "Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq," in *Nuṣūṣ Mukhṭarah min al-Adab al-Arabi al-Ḥadīth* prose 1*, Aʿlam al Rouwwad. (Chosen Texts from Modern Arabic Literature,* prose 1*, The Leading Thinkers),* Op. cit., p. 159.

[4] Al-Khāzin, Nasīb Wahibeh, "Hāthā al-Kitāb" (This Book), in *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq fi ma Houwa al-Fāryāq (Leg Over Leg)*, al-Hayat Library Publications, Beirut, 1966, p. 59.

[5] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh (Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, His Influence and Era)* Op. cit., p. 19.

[6] ʿAbbūd, Marūn, *Saqr Lubnān (Lebanon's Eagle),* op. cit., p. 99. It seems that ʿAbbūd did not look carefully into Ash-Shidyāq's age at the time of his death, and had he done so, he would have reconsidered the year 1805 that he previously specified as the date of his birth. In addition, ʿAbbūd mentions, in his book on p. 90, that Ash-Shidyāq died in Constantinople "at the age of 83."

[7] Refer to the text of this letter in ʿImād Aṣ-Ṣulḥ's book pp. 126-127.

[8] Sheikh Charles Camille Ash-Shidyāq confirmed this date in an interview with him conducted on Tuesday night, January 19, 2016, at 4:00 p.m. based on a previous appointment in his home in the Butum district, Beirut, Ḥadath; which is the home of his cousin Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, where he was born and raised, and there he witnessed some of his childhood and early adolescence ordeals.

him as the administrator of his affairs". Thereafter, Yūsuf moved to ʿAshqūt after purchasing "the houses of his father Manṣūr and his uncle Buṭrus from the daughter of Shaykh Slaybīi al-Khāzin and her mother." Prince Milḥim Shihāb had confiscated these two houses and "had given them to Shaykh Abī Ṣlaybī Mirʿib al-Khāzin" after becoming displeased with his administrator Buṭrus who could not provide him with the money because of the greedy governor of Sidon. So, Manṣūr, Fāris' grandfather and his two cousins moved – coercively – from ʿAshqūt to "the Butum quarter in Ḥadath, Beirut between 1739 and 1741". But the stay of Fāris' parents in ʿAshqūt did not last long, for they left with their children and went back to the Ḥadath district in 1809 after the death of Prince Ḥasan. In the following year, Yūsuf's father sold "his house in ʿAshqūt to the children of Prince Yūsuf, the son of Prince Milḥim Shihāb Shihāb (…) and from thereon, the Shidyāq's never returned to ʿAshqūt except as visitors or to spend the summer"[1].

Chapters of the Family's Life

Fāris "is the fifth sibling and the most well-known in the family"[2], his four elder siblings are: Tannūs, the eldest (1791-1861), the author of *Tārīkh al-Aʿyān Aʿyān fi Jabal Lubnān Lubnān*, (*The History of the Nobles in Mount Lebanon),* Manṣūr (1795-1841), Asʿad (1798-1830), and Ghālib (1800-1842)[3]. His family "is connected in its relation with language, literature, and acquiring religious and historical knowledge"[4]. The big family has a lot of members, and "one of exceptional nobility"[5]. Fāris, describes his parents as "noble, elegant, and genuine"[6]. The family was met with disasters right before the birth of Fāris, and this lasted until his adolescent years, and this is what pushed him to say on his birthday that "the birth of al-Fāryāq Fāryāq was the

[1] Masʿad, Būlus, *Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., pp. 10-16. It seems that Masʿad is getting his information from Ṭānyūs Ash-Shidyāq's book *Akhbar al-Aʿyān fi Jabal Lubnān (Reports on the Nobles of Mount Lebanon)* printed in 1859. One can also refer to what Sheikh Nasīb Wahibeh al-Khāzin in his introduction of *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq fi Ma Houwa al-Fāryāq (Leg over Leg),* pp. 53-54, taken from Ṭānyūs Ash-Shidyāq's *Akhbar al-Aʿyān fi Jabal Lubnān.*

[2] Dāghir, Yūsuf Asʿad, "Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, 1804?-1887," *Maṣāḍir Ad-Dirāsah al-Adabiyyah,* Part II, *al-Fikr al-ʿArabī al-Ḥadīth fi Sayri A'lamihi, al-Rahiloun,* (1800-1955), op. cit., p. 458.

[3] Būlus Masʿad put out brief biographies on all of the siblings on pages 11-15 in his book *Fāris Ash-Shidyāq.* There are other writings for Ṭānyūs Ash-Shidyāq, still handwritten, including the summary of *Tārīkh al-Azminah (The History of Times)* by Patriarch Steven al-Duwayhī, put out in 1848. His cousin Sheikh Charles Camille Ash-Shidyāq showed us his preserved copy during our interview with him that we have mentioned above, and it is in great condition, with the elegant and masterful handwriting of the author. We will dedicate a special section for his brother Asʿad later in the biography.

[4] Al-Ashtar, Abdel Karim, "Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq" in *Nuṣūṣ Mukhṭarah min al-Adab al-Arabi al-Ḥadīth* prose 1, *Aalam al-Rouwwad,* op. cit., p. 17.

[5] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh (Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, His Influence and Era),* op. cit., p. 17.

[6] Ash-Shidyāq, Aḥmād Fāris, As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq *fi Ma Houwa al-Fāryāq (Leg over Leg).* Sheikh Nasīb Wahibeh al-Khāzin an introduction for it and he commented on it. al-Hayat Library, Beirut, 1966, p. 83.

ascendant of jinx, and a scorpion lifting her tail to the male goat, and the crab marching on the horns of a bull"[1].

His father Yūsuf was the "guardian of Prince Yūsuf ash-Shahābī's children and of other princes in dispute over the ruling of Lebanon"[2] among the antagonists of Prince Bashir ash-Shahābī II. The animosity between the Shidyāq family and Prince Bashir is old and well-known, and it is traced back to the day when the governor of ʿAkka Aḥmād Pasha al-Jazzār ousted him from princehood for not helping him during Bonaparte's blockade of ʿAkka. The Shidyāq's also were leaning toward "the princes Ḥasan Alī and Salmān Sayyid Aḥmād, who are cousins of Prince Bashir". He eventually returned to princehood after reconciling with al-Jazzār, but they never forgave each other, which prompted them to remain antagonists until the end of his tenure[3].

Furthermore, about those times of animosity and conflict, al-Fāryāq said that his father leaned toward the enemies of Prince Bashir and tried to join them with ousting him, but they failed and fled to Damascus pleading their governor for help. During "the night when they fled, the Prince's army attacked the land of al-Fāryāq, and so he fled with his mother to a nearby safe abode that belonged to the princes", the attackers also robbed the house including "the lute that he used to play in his spare time"[4].

His Education

Fāris' education began with the tutor of his town who was "like the rest of the tutors for boys" during those times. He had not read, throughout all his life, except one book "al-Zubūr," and it is the book that all the children used to study without understanding what it meant. When Ash-

[1] Ibid, same page.

[2] Ṣawāyā, Mikhāʾīl, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athārih – Hayetihi (Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, His Influence – His Life)*, op. cit., p. 17, footnote1. For more on Aḥmād Fāris' faither Yūsuf Ash-Shidyāq's relationship with princes and the roles he played in assisting them, one can refer to: Masʿad, Būlus, *Fāris Ash-Shidia,* op. cit., pp. 10-11, and Yūsuf's sons, Ṭānyūs, Manṣūr, Asʿad, and Ghālib, continued to work with the princes. For more about this, one can read pages 11-15 from Masʿad's book.

[3] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, Aḥmād *Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh (Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, His Influence and Era),* op. cit., p.17.

[4] Ash-Shidyāq, Aḥmād Fāris, *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq fi ma Houwa al-Fāryāq (Leg over Leg)*, op. cit., p.97. The father Yūsuf fled "to Damascus, accompanied by his sons Ṭānyūs, Manṣūr, and Ghālib. Asʿad however, hid in Ḥadath then fled to Qannūbīn," and from there he went to Tripoli, then finally he followed his father and brothers to Damascus. "And at the time, Prince Bashir's men during that battle were ruled by Prince Ḥaydar Aḥmād Shihab, the author of the well-known *al-Ghurar al-Hisan"* (Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., p. 20. The complete title of the book is *Al-Ghurar al-Hisan fī Akhbār Ahl al-Zamān (The Beautiful Youths in the Olden Times' Tales),* and for that prince, Ash-Shidyāq works for a while as a transcriber. Furthermore, in his introduction, p.55, Nasīb Wahibeh al-Khāzin, that the attack on the house occurred in 1813, and specifies different reasons behind getting and fleeing to the countries that they fled, which are not like the ones we have mentioned above.

Shidyāq "finished reading the aforementioned book"[1], he completed his disciplinary studies, and worked on transcribing books at home, based on the demands of his father's tutor. He had the chance, during his early adolescent years, to benefit from his father's valuable library, and to be tutored by his siblings, especially by his brother Asʿad who worked as a transcriber for many nobles, and who also taught some of the princes' sons the Arabic language, morphology, and syntax, which will be mentioned later in this biography. He proceeded in transcribing for "a long time" although he "had not mastered this craft" but it helped him enhance his handwriting and memorize some pronunciations[2].

The ʿAyn Waraqah School

Many of those who worked on Ash-Shidyāq's biography have mentioned that he was a student at the ʿAyn Waraqah School. Some of them were Būlus Masʿad (page 17), Marūn ʿAbbūd (page 90), Abdel Kareem al-Ashtar (page 159), Mikhāʾīl Ṣawāyā (page 17), Yūsuf Assad Dāghir (pages 458-459), Kamāl aṣ-Ṣalībī in his book *Tārīkh Lubnān al-Hadith* (*The Modern History of Lebanon*)[3], Fawwāz Ṭrābulsī and Azīz al-ʿAẓamah (page 13), Father Camille Hushaymah (S.J.) (page 657), and many others. ʿImād aṣ-Ṣulḥ however, was dubious about it, and he said that it is more probable that it never happened. We lean, on our part, to this probability, and we agree with him based on the justification he posited by saying that Ash-Shidyāq did not mention anything about it in his Fāryāq, despite "how much this school meant to him personally", and describing it as "ideal in teaching the Arabic language". Furthermore, aṣ-Ṣulḥ attributed their error to a probable confusion "between Fāris and his two brothers, Ghālib and Asʿad, who had attended that school, and Asʿad was one of Patriarch Ḥubaysh's students during his time of teaching there"[4].

[1] Ibid, p. 84.
[2] Ibid, p. 86.
[3] Al-Salibi, Kamal, *Tārīkh Lubnān al-Ḥadīth (The Modern History of Lebanon),* Annahar Printing Press, Beirut, 7th edition, 1991 (first edition was in 1967), p. 189.
[4] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Hayatihi wa Athārih*. Op. cit., pp. 232-233, footnote 22.

Transcription and other Professions

In 1820, Fāris' father passed away, after his Asthmatic condition worsened, and "an obituary was put out", the former continued living with his mother and transcribing at home[1]. This craft was still thrown at him until he began to master it. Prince Ḥaydar Aḥmād Shihāb – the author of *al-Ghurarr al-Ḥassān fī Akhbār Ahl al-Zamān (The Beautiful Youths in the Olden Times' Tales)*, asking him to transcribe what he was collecting from documents and material in preparation to publish that book. Prince Ḥaydar was the one who led those who attacked his house in Ḥadath and destroyed it after robbing it. For that reason, Fāris abhorred him deeply, but he had to take the offer due to financial difficulties. He later realized that working for the prince did not ease his financial difficulties, since the latter was stingy, and so he left him[2] and returned home.

After his return home, he visited his brother Asʿad, who used to work "as a writer for the Druze elite". And he saw how the latter "was harsh and rude and having traits that do not resemble his character", he went back to his town, making a vow to himself "to never get involved with the elite business"[3], adamant to find another job that would save him from his poverty.

The job that he intended to take, with the help of his friend and after making an agreement with him, was to market merchandise that they got from "some countries". After "they rode a donkey to carry the merchandise", and roamed many villages[4], the idea appeared to be a bad one, so they intended to rent an Inn on some of the roads. But Fāris could not proceed with his new job, due to his grandfather's harsh objection, and so he gave up on it and went back home to his transcriptions, stating that "the pen's scratch is bigger than the merchandiser's bags, and the spread of black ink is more flattering than the colors of the merchandise"[5]. During that period in

[1] Ibid, p. 99. We agreed on 1820 to be the date of the father's death, which is correct, based on: Masʿad, Būlus, *Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p.17. What prompted us to rely on this source is what Masʿad mentions on page 11 that the father died at the age of 58. It is fair to mention that Masʿad uses another date on p. 9, which is 1821, where the dates of his life and death were as the following: 1762-1821. And 1821 was the date put by Ṣawāyā in his book on page 19. Fawwāz Ṭrābulsī and ʿAzīz al-Aẓmah however, mention in their book on Ash-Shidyāq (p. 13), the year 1830, which the incorrect date of the father's death. Ash-Shidyāq himself never put dates to all of the real events of his life that he wrote in *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq fi ma Houwa al-Fāryāq.*

[2] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athārih wa AAasrihi (Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, His Influence and Era),* op. cit., pp. 21-22. In his book *Al-Fāryāq (Leg over Leg),* pp. 101-106, there is a lengthy and sarcastic description of Prince Haidar, and examples on what he used to write for him, and how he left his work with him.

[3] Ash-Shidyāq, Fāris, *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq fi ma Houwa al-Fāryāq (Leg Over Leg)*, op. cit., pp. 107-109.

[4] Marūn ʿAbbūd mentions a number of these villages: Bṣūṣ, Bshāmūn, and ʿAyn ʿAnūb, all of which are today among the towns belonging to the district of Alley in the province of Mount Lebanon: ʿAbbūd, Marūn, *Saqr Lubnān,* op. cit., p. 97.

[5] Ash-Shidyāq, Aḥmād Fāris, *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq fi ma Houwa al-Fāryāq,* op. cit., pp. 110-113, 123.

his life, he had the opportunity to teach "some of the princes' sons and daughters"[1]. And it seems that he had fancied a girl from his neighborhood, who was beautiful; he overlooked her mistakes, and "she regressed with her education, and he progressed with his obsession"[2] with her. After a while, his brother Assad returned to the Butum quarter in Ḥadath, and began to teach two princes syntax, and Fāris then joined which made his mastery of the Arabic language even more and more possible[3]. Furthermore, with Asʿad's return to Ḥadath, a new beginning was dawning which will have an ongoing impact on the family, and it will drastically change the life of our translator.

The Case of Asʿad Ash-Shidyāq (1798-1830)[4]

Asʿad Ash-Shidyāq is the third son of Yūsuf Ash-Shidyāq. An incident which put his family's life through serious danger, including Fāris'; and its huge impact was not on the family only, but it went far beyond that, and its echo read "a full generation of Lebanese sophisticates", starting from Khalīl Mashāqqah (1800-1888), Buṭrus al-Bustānī (1819-1883), and many others, reaching Gibran Khalīl Gibran (1883-1931) in whose works Khalīl Ḥāwī sees "a presence for this incident". In addition to that, "the political and theological factors went hand in hand in Maronite Church's campaign against the Evangelists". It also came amid the clashes between the French and the English in that domain, representing "the conservative direction that dominated the Catholic Church in Rome" after the Jesuits' had again taken over "propaganda," and their hindrance to the resistance of "the intellectual influences of the French Revolution and to the Protestant reformation on the republic of believers around the world"[5].

A large number of researchers worked on the case, his tragedies were written and "first printed in Malta in 1833 in a handbook titled *Khabariyyat Asʿad Ash-Shidyāq (The Account of Asʿad Ash-Shidyāq)*, then it was rewritten and extended with facts by Buṭrus al-Bustānī in a book titled *Qissat Asʿad Ash-Shidyāq (The Story of Asʿad Ash-Shidyāq)*, which was printed for the first time

[1] Ṣawāyā, Mikhāʾīl, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Ḥayātihi – Athārih,* op. cit., p.20.
[2] Ash-Shidyāq, Aḥmād Fāris, *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq fi ma Houwa al-Fāryāq,* op. cit., p. 125.
[3] Ibid, p. 129.
[4] On the case of his brother Asʿad, one can refer to what his brother Fāris in the third part of chapter 19 in his first book of *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq fi ma Houwa al-Fāryāq,* titled: "ʿAarḍ Kātib al-Ḥurūf," pp. 187-194.Concerning the date mentioned above, one can refer to what will be mentioned in the following page.
[5] Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and Al-Aẓmah, ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p. 14. The two writers discussed Asʿad's case on pages 13-17 of their book.

in 1860 and reprinted in 1878[1]. Furthermore, Būlus Masʿad also wrote about it in his book *Fāris Ash-Shidyāq* (pp. 12-14), printed in Egypt in 1934; and so did ʿImād aṣ-Ṣulḥ aṣ-Ṣulḥ in *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Atharihi wa ʻAsrihi (Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, His Influence and Era)* (pp. 22-26); and Ṭrābulsī and al-Aẓmah in *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq* (pp. 13-17), among others. Although many sides of the story remain unclear, we will concisely delve into it with, while referring the reader, for more details, to what the aforementioned researchers wrote about it.

The story revolves around Asʿad's conversion from the Maronite to the Evangelical sect in 1825[2]. When the Archbishop Buṭrus Karam, the Head of Beirut's Maronite Bishops, put out a book in which he attacked the Protestants' claims, Asʿad – who was a writer in his service/office – responded[3], against which the Maronite clergy revolted, including Patriarch Yūsuf Ḥubaysh, the Patriarch of the sect at that time, and so in 1826 he called him in to "repent? And arrested him in Dayr ʿAlmā on the Kisirwān Coast". Asʿad however, managed to escape to Beirut, and wrote down what had happened in a letter to the American messenger Isaac Bird. But his parents brought him back to the authorities of the church, and he was arrested in the Qannubīn convent, the previous patriarchal center, where the conditions were dire, resulting in his death, and which were not confirmed "until the summer of 1832 when the English merchant Richard Todd was given permission to enter the convent and inspect it himself". And Todd had managed to meet Ibrāhīm Pasha al-Maṣrī in ʿAkkā who requested Prince Amir al-Shahabanī II to help him around. And when he headed to Qannubīn to meet the Patriarch, and to look for Asʿad in the convent, the Prince sent out six of his soldiers, and he offered him a written order to facilitate his endeavor. At his arrival, he found the Patriarch waiting for him, who then confirmed to him that the death had occurred two years before. But "Todd insisted" on investigating the matter on his own, and so "he assigned the priest Būlus Masʿad, the cousin of Asʿad, to show him the prison cell and the tomb." The latter accompanied him, and assured him that Ascites was the cause of death[4]. The

[1] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., p, 14. Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, in footnote 23 p. 233, a further clarifies of the story: "The story can be divided to three parts or sections. The first and last were written by Būtrus al- Bustānī; as for the middle part, it is claimed to be written by either Fāris or Asʿad; and this part, was printed in 1833 in Malta under the title of "Khabriyyat Asʿad Ash-Shidyāq al-lathī Iḍtuhida li-Ajl Iqrārihi fil Ḥaqq" (The Story of Asʿad Ash-Shidyāq who was Persecuted for Choosing the Right Path). And it is, in our opinion, written by either Fāris nor Asʿad, and it could be that Asʿad was consulted for remembering some of the events. Anyhow, the three parts complete one another; and they tell the story of Asʿad, and the events that happened to him as a result of his conversion from Maronite to Evangelist.

[2] Al-Salibi, Kamal, *Tārīkh Lubnān al-Ḥadīth (The Modern History of Lebanon),* op. cit., p. 90.

[3] ʿAbbūd, Marūn, *Saqr Lubnān (Lebanon's Eagle),* op. cit., p. 39.

[4] Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah, ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., pp. 14-15.

exact date of his death cannot be known, but it can be approximated. So, if we agree with Buṭrus al-Bustānī that the Patriarch has asked for him in the beginning of 1826, and if we agree with his brother Fāris that he remained in prison for six years, it could mean that he died in 1832. But if we take into consideration what the Patriarch Ḥubaysh had said to the merchant Todd, who went to look for him, that it happened two years before[1], then it means that he died in 1830. Kamāl aṣ-Ṣalībī however, specifies a third date which is 1829, without mentioning the source of this information[2]. Therefore, to know the exact date is rather difficult.

Between Egypt and Malta

It is certain that Fāris leaned toward Protestantism, under his brother's influence, before the latter gets arrested and goes through what he went through. He had a great influence on him and Fāris loved him dearly and looked up to him as a role model, and so he made him lean toward his direction through by convincing him, and he got him interested in reading a number of religious Protestant books, which he read and which appealed to him. Thereafter, more pressures grew on him from his family and Beirut's Archbishop to get rid of that influence, but he did not give in. And when his brother was arrested in 1826, the dispatchers realized, and so did his family, the danger to his life. So, they decided to save him by sending him to Malta. This occurred in April 1826 and not 1825 as his brother Ṭānyūs falsely claims in his book *Tārīkh al-Aʿyān (The History of the Nobles)* page 198"[3].

It is possible that Fāris' interest in Protestantism and what his brother had gone through are not the only reasons behind his migration to Malta. But, at that time he was contemplating "leaving Lebanon and traveling abroad in the pursuit of fortune and glory." In addition to that "the Shidyāq sons had conspired against Prince Bashir the Great," who was able to win them over, "they feared his vengeance, and Fāris being a young man who aspired to venture and willing to take the risks of emigration, was given permission to leave and be saved from the Prince's vice"[4].

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[1] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh, (His Influence and Era),* op. cit., p. 25. One can also refer to: Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah, ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., pp. 15-16.
[2] Aṣ-Ṣalībī, Kāmāl, *Tārīkh Lubnān al-Ḥadīth (The Modern History of Lebanon),* op. cit., p. 172.
[3] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athārih wa AAasrihi,* op. cit., p. 23 and p.233, footnote 31.
[4] Masʿad, Būlus, *Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p. 17, footnote 1.

Fāris went to Alexandria first on a small ship that was hit by stormy waves a while after its sail. Then when he first arrived, he made an "immediate proposal to the princely authorities, the royals, and the Maronite Patriarch"[1]. Furthermore, the period he spent in Egypt "must not have exceeded a month or two," during which he waited for another ship to take him to Malta, or the letter exchange that was supposed to take place between "the [Protestant] priest in Egypt and Isaac Bird, which is what happened. But the Rheumatoid that hit him, when he was on the island, forced the "Khorjiyin"[2] that took care of him on the island, to send him back to Egypt, after spending a little over a year on the island[3].

Fāris stayed in Egypt and worked with the missionaries, he taught them Arabic, and he also acquired "the knowledge and science of words and Logic by the al-Azhar Shaykhs and scholars and writers such as Nasrallah at-Ṭrābulsī (1770 – 1850), Shihāb ad-Dīn Muḥammad bin Ismaʿīl al- Mālikī (1803 – 1857)[4], among many others. But he then went after a new job that enabled him to "sneak away" from them. He then got the opportunity to meet with a man "of eminence and sophistication" who gave him access to the *al-Waqāʾiʿ al-Miṣriyyah (The Egyptian Events)* Newspaper. His job in it was to translate its Turkish publications to Arabic, and to correct what was published in Arabic. Aṣ-Ṣulḥ asserts, contrary to what many researchers claim, that Ash-Shidyāq did not have a prestigious position in the newspaper, and he did not leave a significant impact. However, working there had a great impact on instructing him on a journalistic path, onto which he embarks after about a quarter of a century and establishes the "al-Jawāʾib" newspaper[5].

Fāris left his work in "al-Jawāʾib" between late 1834 and early 1835, and he taught at a school "that most probably belonged to the English Church," and he found a place to live in at that

[1] The text of the letter can be referred to in *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq fi ma Houwa al-Farya,* op. cit., pp. 187-194.

[2] "Al-Khurjiyyūn" is the name that Ash-Shidyāq gave to the Protestants, taken from "al-Khorj" "which is a bowl of hair or skin placed the back of an animal to put stuff in." (Al-Bustānī, Būtrus, *Mūḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ,* op. cit., p. 323). And Ash-Shidyāq in his description is referring to the bag that the missionary used to carry on his back, where he out a few of his belongings, while wandering from one place to another; whereas "Sūqiyyūn" is the name he gave to Catholics and he took it from "Souk," which is a fixed place in shops, where the owners promote their merchandise. Ash-Shidyāq did not conceal the mockery behind the descriptions. In his "al-Fāryāq," pp. 195-198, he used the title "On the difference between the Sūqiyyūn and Khurjiyyūn."

[3] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit. pp. 27-28. Considering the contradictions an Ash-Shidyāq's biography during that period, and based on the discussions, analysis, and research done, and on their mentioning in Aṣ-Ṣulḥ's books, we settled with the information given by him.

[4] Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p.17. "Nasrallah al-Ṭrābulsī, a Catholic from Aleppo migrated to Egypt in 1828, and he followed Najīb al-Baḥrī and became a writer in his office, then he was taken by him to the service of Mohammad Alī ." (Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., p. 234, footnote 45.)

[5] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 30-31.

school. The school was also "next to some merchants from Syria" from the aṣ-Sūlī family. So, he met the daughter of this family, and she was "Sūqiyyah" which meant Catholic, and he "Khorjiy" meaning Protestant. Her family refused to marriage proposal for that reason, so he found himself obliged to Catholicize for one day, which was the day of the marriage. Before his marriage, the Evangelist Delegation in Malta requested him to translate some of their religious books to Arabic. Thereafter, Fāris left Egypt, accompanied by his wife, and went to Malta for the second time[1].

Which year did he return to Malta with his wife? This is what we do not know precisely. Abdel Karīm al-Ashtar (p. 160) and Yūsuf Asʿad Dāghir (p. 459), specified the date to be 1834, which is what researchers had then followed. The truth of the matter however, was that he was still in Egypt at that time. So, by the end of 1834 and beginning of 1835, he quit his job at "al-Waqāʾiʿ al-Miṣriyya," and worked at the commissaries' school, and during his work there, he met the Ṣūlī daughter which he had then married. And so, it could be that his return to the island was "around 1835"[2].

Regardless of the date of his return, Ash-Shidyāq worked on "the task given to him" and began translating *Kitāb aṣ-Ṣalāwāt al-ʿĀmmah ʿalā Mūjib Istiʿmāl al-Kanīsah al-Irlandiyyah maʿ Mazāmīr Dāwūd (The Book of Public Prayers According to the Irish Church and the Psalms of David),* it was translated and published in Valletta, the capital of Malta, in 1840[3]. Furthermore, on this island, his jobs were of different domains, other than the translation of religious books approved by the Evangelists, there was the editeding of their publications, and teaching. This is how his job was stretched between "the print and teaching at a public school." Before teaching, he was obliged to publish works, and the first books he had to publish were grammar books. So, he managed to complete *Baḥth al-Maṭālib* by Archbishop Jirmanos Farḥāt in Arabic grammar. "Then he published *Al-Bakūrah al-Shahiyyah fī Naḥū al-Lughah al-Inglīziyyah (The First Appetite in English Grammar),* and it is his first book." After that, he edited "*al-Kanz al-Mukhtār*

[1] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 38-39.
[2] Ibid, p. 42.
[3] Ibid, p.40.

fī Kashf al-Arāḍī wal Biḥār" (The Chosen Treasure in the Discovery of Lands and Seas), which is a Geography book for beginners. These three books were printed in Malta in 1836[1].

The period during which he resided in Malta was a fruitful one which enabled him to embark on his writing journey. In 1939, he put out *Al-Lafīf fī Kull Maʿnā Ẓarīf,* which is among his first books on Arabic grammar, to take over his previous book *Baḥth al-Maṭālib,* and he distributed it for the first time in Malta, and he followed it up in 1840 with a book that was a continuation for *al-Bakūrah al-Shahīrah,* entitled *al-Muḥāwarah al-Unsiyya fī al-Lughatayn al-Ingliziyyah wal ʿArabiyya (The Humanistic Dialogue in English and Arabic),* in addition to his translation of *Sharḥ Ṭawābiʿ al-Ḥayawānāt (Explaining the Character of Animals).* Most probably, that book was specialized for elementary students. During that time, he organized doxologies "to be recited at Protestant churches, and which were made into a booklet entitled *Ṣalīb al-Masīḥ (The Cross of Christ)*[2].

We now go to another issue during this "Maltian" period from Ash-Shidyāq's life and shed light on it based on what aṣ-Ṣulḥ recounts. It is the issue of clarifying the matter of the printing press in Malta "that he worked at; and some researchers speculated that" it was the American printing press that the dispatchers had moved to Beirut in 1834. But actually, it is "the printing press that belonged to the English complex." Ash-Shidyāq himself had mentioned that in a letter to his brother Ṭānyūs dated April 5th, 1839[3].

Ash-Shidyāq interrupted his stay Malta on two occasions; the first was when he visited Lebanon with the head of the printing press, and that was during the revolution against Ibrāhīm Pasha (1840). And so he had the opportunity to spend some time in Beirut, and in Ḥadath. Then when the situation calmed down, he visited along with his fellow travelers Baalbek, then Damascus, and from there returned to Beirut. Finally, they sailed, on their way back, to Java and Alexandria, all the way to Malta. He mentioned, in two of his notes, seeing some Christian families on his

[1] Ibid, p. 40-41.
[2] Ibid, p. 41. Aṣ-Ṣulḥ mentioned in footnote 45 of his book, p. 234, that he found a copy of this booklet in the library of the British Museum, numbered 1010-14505 "without the name of the printing press and the date of the print." And it consists of "13 hymns with the total number of 239 verses, and this booklet does not have a cover, so, it was given the title of the first hymn *Ṣalīb al-Massīḥ (The Cross of the Messiah).*
[3] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 41-42.

way to Ḥāzmiyyah, and the return of safety to the mountain[1]. The second occasion was when he visited Tunisia for the first time, in the summer of 1841, during the school vacation, and then he composed a poem praising its governor Aḥmād Pasha and sent it to him. The latter was impressed by it and he gifted him "a sniff box bedecked with diamonds with a book from Mustapha Pasha the Khaznadār of the Tunisian State[2]. Ash-Shidyāq quit his job at the English complex's printing press in 1843, between May 17th and July 13th. He was then obliged to send his family to Egypt. Furthermore, aṣ-Ṣulḥ, noted, in a detailed manner, the reason behind his resignation, referring it to the disagreement on "the method of translation in the religious texts" that went on between him and Archbishop Athanasius al-Tutunji, the Archbishop of Tripoli and Sham for the Melkite Catholic Church. It was noted that "the translation committee belonging to the organization of spreading Christian knowledge"[3], located in London, had assigned him to translate "*Ikhtiyarat min Kitāb aṣ-Ṣalawāt al-ʿĀmmah wa Ghayrihā (Selections from aṣ-Ṣalawāt al-ʿĀmmah and other Works),* with specific Sunday prayer and the baptism of children…" which is not the same book as *aṣ-Ṣalāwāt al-ʿʿĀmmah maʿ Mazāmīr Dāwūd (Public Prayers with the Psalms of David)* that we had mentioned earlier, and which Ash-Shidyāq translated and it was printed in 1840. The latter is in fact the summary of the former. So, Ash-Shidyāq went on translating to Arabic "based on the Arabic grammar". And when At-Tutunjī visited London, he contacted the members of the organization and criticized Ash-Shidyāq's translation considering that "its expressions are Islamic and they do not march the Church." The members of the organization agreed with al-Tutunjī, and dismissed Ash-Shidyāq from his job in translation and at the printing press. But Ash-Shidyāq was hired again due to Dr. Samuel Lee, who was "one of the Trinity college professors at Cambridge University"[4], and he was assigned to translate the extended *al-Ikhtiyārāt al-ʿĀmmah (Selected Prayers).*

Ash-Shidyāq left the island to London in 1846, in the "Fire Ship," and he stayed there for about eight months, during which he completed the translation of the *Extended Selected Prayers* book.

[1] Ibid, same page. For further reference: Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah, ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p.18.
[2] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., p. 44.
[3] The correct and complete name of the organization is: "The Bible Society to Foster the Knowledge of Christianity." For further reference: Rihani, Ameen Albert, "Shidyāqiyat Beirut" (The Shidyāq's of Beirut), from *Al-Tarjamat al-ʿArabiyyah lil-Kitāb al-Muqaddas wa Athārihā fī Ḥarakāt an-Nahḍah (The Arabic Translations of the Bible and their Influence on the Arabic Renaissance Movement.)* A lecture given at the American University of Beirut, on November 2nd, 2015; p. 15. We will use this name when referring to the organization in the following pages.
[4] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 45-53.

The committee liked the translation and went on printing it with the *Mazāmīr Mazāmīr Dāwūd (Psalms of David),* in London in 1850. Ash-Shidyāq was getting a monthly salary worth 12 pounds throughout the entire working months, and he also received 25 pounds as a gift, to compensate for the travel expenses. Then when he returned to Malta, he discovered his wife's misbehavior, and the incident shook him the way his brother Asʿad's incident "had shaken him," and that's when he created the final bit of his personality[1].

A last issue we would like to mention in our conclusion of "Maltian Period" section from Ash-Shidyāq's life, is the urgency of Prince Bashir II, who was deported and residing in Malta, to reach out to Ash-Shidyāq for a translation assignment with an important figure from the British Intelligence, "who had come from England and was heading from Malta to the Levant, and whose name was Colonel Mick Navan." Furthermore, Ash-Shidyāq had mentioned this incident in a letter he sent to his brother Ṭānyūs dated March 12, 1841, which was publish by Yūsuf Ibrāhīm Yazbik in his magazine *Awrāq Lubnāniyyah (Lebanese Papers)*[2], which Ash-Shidyāq missed to mention in his book *Al-Wāsiṭah fi Maʿrifat Aḥwāl Malta (The Means to the Know about Malta)* that was published in Malta in 1843, which bewildred Marūn ʿAbbūd and pushed him to say that, "The author was as silent as a fish regarding the captive of Malta (Prince Bashir), although he wrote an entire treatise on Malta and he was there when Prince Bashir was exiled to it. This is what stuns me…"[3]

A Second Visit to Tunisia

Ash-Shidyāq returned to the island, and carried on with his previous job there. In late 1846, the governor of Tunisian State Marshal Aḥmād Pasha visited Paris, after receiving an invitation from the French government. He ended his visit with a financial donation to the poor in Marseille and Paris. And when Ash-Shidyāq heard of the donation news, he wrote a poem[4] known for its praise: Suʿād came and the gown of night floated leaving her witness' quill with ink coated.

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[1] Ibid, pp. 56-58.

[2] Yazbik, Yūsuf Ibrāhīm, "Athar Lubnāni" (Lebanese Influence), in *Awrāq Lubnāniyyah, Vol. 1, First Section,* January 1955, Ḥazmiyyah, ar-Rāʾid al-Lubnāni Press, 1983, without edition, p.40. The full text of the letter is found on pp. 40-41.

[3] ʿAbbūd, Marūn, *Saqr Lubnān,* op. cit., p.84.

[4] In this poem, Ash-Shidyāq uses the famous poem written by Kaʿb bin Zuhayr to praise Prophet Mohammad which begins with: "Suʿād appeared and so my heart today is enamored" For that reason, the Bai Aḥmād banned it. Ash-Shidyāq respected the Bai's decision and did not publish it until his death. The orientalist and member of the Asian organization Gustav Duga translated it to French, and printed it along with the Arabic version in 1851 in Paris. (Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., p. 61, 188.)

He sent it to him. Then, the "Bai" sent a warship to take Ash-Shidyāq and his family to Tunisia – on a second visit to the country – where he resided for a period during which he acquired respect and esteem, and he was assigned by the Marshal's ministers to provide him with all of the international political news based on sources from the news or the English press. After his return from Tunisia, he taught at the "Protestant College of Saint Julian," and he began to translate and give private lessons in the Arabic Language[1].

In England

During that time, the "translation committee" belonging to The English Organization of Promoting Christian Knowledge decided to give the Bible, both testaments, a new Arabic translation from its original language. Furthermore, Dr. Samuel Lee, asked Ash-Shidyāq to come, accompanied by his family, to England[2].

Ash-Shidyāq and his family left Malta in September 1848 – after spending around 14 years there – and headed to Barley in England, where Dr. Lee lived, and he arrived in late 1848. He knew the country quite well, since he had lived in it before in 1846 to translate *Public Prayers.* During his stay there, he was struck by the death of his two-year-old youngest son, which was caused by Diphtheria. Then, after this incident, Ash-Shidyāq and his family moved to Cambridge, where he then lived for more than a year. He was still working in translation. When his translation was almost done, he tried to "teach Arabic at one of Oxford's colleges, but to no avail." Then, the "committee" tried to facilitate his return to the island, but he refused, and insisted on staying in Europe. And so, the committee reassigned him to "edit and correct the Bible's print, whether in London or in Paris, for 30 Schillings per week"[3].

Ash-Shidyāq's translation of the Bible came across as "the most accurate translation, based on the testimony of one of those times' experts, the well-known Archbishop Yūsuf al-Dibis." As for him, "he was not fully pleased," and he suffered greatly during the translation with Samuel Lee. And his book *Kashf al-Mukhabbaʾ ʿan Funūn Europa (Revealing What is Hidden in Europe's Arts),* he described Dr. Lee's works during the translation, and his obsession with the eloquent

[1] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 59-62.
[2] Ibid, p. 63.
[3] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 64-66.

compositions, with rhymes, and in sentences that end with "*ūn*" and in "*īn*," and considering them "similar to the Koranic styles and replacing them." He also mentioned Lee's "extremism with the Torah"[1].

During that period of his stay in England, he received the British citizenship in honor of his person and knowledge, and he kept it all his life to "trick the Ottoman State with it since his political tendency was with Egypt"[2].

Paris or Freedom

Many reasons pushed Ash-Shidyāq to go to Paris: the death of his son Asʿad, not receiving an educational post, and the refusal of "the English Organization for Promoting Christian Knowledge," to help him out, his "aversion to the Protestant Puritan pastors and their conservatism," his desire to learn French, the affordable means of living, and his wife's "heart palpitations" disease[3]; all of this prompted him to leave England and head to Paris.

Ash-Shidyāq lived in Paris for about 30 months: from December 1850 to June 1853. During that period, he learned French and mastered it after mastering English, and he also read the works of some of the great French literary writers. The period of his stay in France is considered to be one of the most fruitful periods of his life in terms of writing and publishing, for at that time he published his most notable works: *As-Sāq ʿAlā as-Sāq fi ma Houwa al-Fāryāq (Leg over Leg)*, it was printed in Paris, early 1855, at the expenses of Raphael Kahla al-Dimashki), and *Sir al-Layali fil Kalbi wal ʻIbdal* – in Jezzine, the first copy was published in Istanbul in the Ottoman printing press in 1867, and the second is still handwritten – and the third book, *al-Jāsūs ʿalā al-Qāmūs (The Dictionary Spy)* – Istanbul 1882 – and *Muntahā al-ʿajab fī Khaṣāʾiṣ Lughat al-ʿArab*[4] *(The Utmost Fascination with the Characteristics of the Arabs' Language)*– which consisted of many sections and it was burned[5].

[1] ʿAbbūd, Marūn, *Saqr Lubnān,* op. cit., pp. 94-96.
[2] Ibid, p. 98.
[3] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., p. 67. For further reference: Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p.19.
[4] "It was a large book which he spent long years in writing, whereby he looked for the meanings of every letter of spelling […]" But he it was burned when his house is Astana caught fire: Al-Bustānī, Būṭrus, *The Circle of Knowledge,* 10th section, op. cit., p. 430.
[5] Ibid, p.70. Further reference: Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p.21.

During Ash-Shidyāq's stay in Paris, he got to pray with some Orientalists, such as "the Orientalist Count Decrange, the head of the State's translations," and the Orientalist "Gustav Duga," a member of the Asian organization, and with whom he co-wrote *Al-Sanad ar-Rāwī fī-Ṣarf al-Faransāwi (The Narrators Bases in French Grammar),* which was printed in Paris in 1853[1]. About his Parisian meetings, it is said that he met the French poet Alphonse de Lamartine (1790 – 1869), and he confirmed this in his *Leg over Leg, (*p. 578), he then mentioned it again ambiguously on page 642. Furthermore, concerning his prayers with the nobles of Lebanese communities in France, we know his "mingling" with some of them, such as "Shaykh Mirʿī al-Dahdah, who lives in Marseille," and his "ridicule" of Mirʿī's relative Rushayd ad-Daḥdaḥ, the owner of *Barjīs Paris* magazine. He also met the Algerian Prince ʿAbdul QādIr who came to Paris "after Napoleon III freed him from house arrest in Amboise, and wrote him a poem praising him in it, and so the prince invited him over. He was met with utmost respect and princely courtesy"[2].

It is worth mentioning a humorous incident that occurred during that period, which aṣ-Ṣulḥ mentions in detail. It is when a delegation from Aleppo consisted of Fathallah Marrash and Shukri ʿAbbūd came to Paris, during a European tour to collect donations for the churches of the city… and a member of the third delegation "Athnasius al-Tutunjī, the one who had a clash with Ash-Shidyāq before", was waiting in Austria because he was prohibited from entering France. ʿAbbūd and Marrāsh frequently visited Ash-Shidyāq, and after they left to London, he found some of his papers missing and was later informed that they had stolen them and they were "parts of a book in which he wrote insults but intended to never publish". Then after a while, "The Bible Society to Foster the Knowledge of Christianity". returned his papers, in London with a letter attached to them, and so he discovered the scheme that al-Tutunjī and his friends had planned to harm him, but the organization did not care about them. Furthermore, according to aṣ-Ṣulḥ, the book that Ash-Shidyāq did not wish to publish was *Mumākaḥāt al-Taʾwīl fi Munaqaḍāt al-Injīl (Discussions on the Interpretation of the Bible's Discrepancies)* and there existed a handwritten version of it in "al-Awqāf" library in Baghdad, which gave him the chance

[1] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., p. 70.
[2] Ibid, p. 68. Further reference: Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p. 20.

to look at it[1]. And another humorous incident that happened to him in Paris was that "the French authorities suspected him to be an agent for the British"[2].

Ash-Shidyāq lived a free and unrestrained life in Paris, and gave in to folly and play. His wife had to leave to Marseille, based on doctors' orders, and then to Istanbul after her recovery, along with her youngest son Salīm, because she preferred living there. But "she returned from Istanbul to Malta because of financial hardships resulting from the war" between the Ottoman State and the Russian Empire. Ash-Shidyāq was going through serious financial difficulties, and so he tried to find a job in London. He then "had to work in Khawaja Ḥawwā's stores in London," but he was fired after about two years. Furthermore, during his work in that business in London, "he took on writing his book *Kashf al-Mukhaba fī Funūn Europa ('Revealing What is Hidden in Europe's Arts')* which was the book on his journey that he began to write and revise after leaving Malta in 1848." During that period, the Tunisian minister Khayr ad-Dīn Pasha came to London, and Ash-Shidyāq went on welcoming and praising him, which pleased the former and "offered him a fine job in Tunis"[3].

In Tunisia for the Third Time

Ash-Shidyāq went to Tunisia along with his second wife, who was British and whom he married in 1857 after the death of his first wife[4]. His arrival to Tunisia was in that same year (1857), according to what Al-Ashtar mentions[5]. The job that the Tunisian minister had offered was "establishing a public journal that consists of local and foreign news, translated from foreign languages to Arabic or not translated. What is implied is the establishment of an Arabic printing press." And this "journal" and the printing press are the "ar-Rāʾid at-Tūnisī" journal and its printing press[6]. Here the clash appears again among researchers around his task in Tunisia. Aṣ-

[1] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 70-71.

[2] Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p.20. One can also refer to what Aṣ-Ṣulḥ mentioned about this incident in his book on page 123, based on Ash-Shidyāq's book *Kashf al-Mukhabba ʿan Funūn Europa (Revealing the Hidden European Arts),* p. 145.

[3] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 74-78. The book *Kashf al-Mukhabba 'an Funūn Europa* mentioned above and the book *Al Wāsiṭah fī Maʿrifat Aḥwāl Malta (The Means to the Know Malta's Conditions)* earned great literary value, which prompted ʿAbbūd to say that the Lebanese literary book began with Ash-Shidyāq when he published these two books. (ʿAbbūd, Marūn, *Saqr Lubnān,* op. cit., p. 74.)

[4] Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p. 21. Aṣ-Ṣulḥ confirms in his book, p. 78, that the date of his second marriage is unknown.

[5] Al-Ashtar, Abdel Karim, "Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq", from *Nuṣūṣ Mukhṭarah min al-Adab al-Arabi al-Ḥadīth (Chosen Texts of Modern Arabic Literature),* prose 1, *A'lam al-Rouwwad,* op. cit., p. 161.

[6] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 77-78.

Ṣulḥ affirms – based on the sources that he looked at, and on the absence of Ash-Shidyāq's pen in the journal – that the latter, after the journal was established, did not perform "the task assigned to him in the journal as it was expected, and as it was believed among writers". And it is assumed that the reason behind this is the pressures put by the British Council for the sake of some of its citizens, along with the aversion between Ash-Shidyāq and Shaykh Maḥmūd Qabādū, who was one of the court men of Tunisia's "Bai." Then, when he found the situation hopeless, Ash-Shidyāq preferred "returning to Istanbul, so he left Tunisia around 1859 and maybe ever before"[1].

One of the most influential events in Ash-Shidyāq's life was his conversion to Islam "on the hands of Mufti al-Ḥanafiyya Muḥammad Bayram IV." He then added Aḥmād to his name "after the name of the Bai, and was nicknamed Abī al-ʿAbbās[2]. Researchers tried as hard as they could to know the reasons that prompted his conversion to Islam. Some of them claimed the reason to be financial benefits, and his greedy pursuit of earning high positions like Father Louis Shaykhū (S.J.). Others claimed it to be religious and intellectual motives; the religious motive being his desire to disconnect himself from the Christianity "with its Maronite Church and its Protestant missionaries," and the intellectual motive was based on his desire to unify "his devotion to the Arabic language and culture with the religion that they held and preached to the world"[3]. And some claimed that it was his conviction in the truth of Islam as a religion, and also his desire to mingle "with the atmosphere of the civilized, intellectual, and linguistic heritage that he was led to live in by his inclinations, talents, and mastery"[4].

Istanbul and "al-Jawāʾib" Period

Ash-Shidyāq left Tunisia and headed to Istanbul near the year 1859 and maybe even before as we have mentioned earlier[5]. He had the opportunity to go to Istanbul to work in the Royal translation bureau, before working in Mr. Ḥawwā's shops in London, but he did not take it. Furthermore, at the time of his arrival to the Sultanate's capital, the odds were in his favor;

[1] Ibid, pp. 81-83.
[2] Ibid, p. 83.
[3] Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., pp. 21-22.
[4] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., p. 74.
[5] The Shidyāq scholars could not agree on when exactly he headed to Astana. Yūsuf Asʿad Dāghir mentions in his book on page 459, that it was in 1857, whereas Ṭrābulsī and Al-Aẓmah mention in their book on page 22, that it was 1860.

"Sami Pasha" was the head of the Ministry of Education, and the two had reciprocated their trust to one another before, when Ash-Shidyāq was living in Egypt and working in "al-Waqāʾiʿ al-Miṣriyyah," and when Sami Pasha[1] was its manager and editor in chief. So, he was hired as an editor in the royal printing press, and became the manager of the editors in it afterwards. Then finally, he established al-Jawāʾib, the newspaper and enterprise[2].

During Ash-Shidyāq's arrival to Istanbul, the vibe of the capital was prepared for the newspaper project that he was about to establish. On one hand, the Ottoman-Russian conflict was at its peak, and it covered/dominated other challenged that the Sultanate was facing, and it met with the aspirations of the great European countries and their interests. On the other hand, he had developed rare expertise in the journalistic work which he acquired from two sources: the first being his work in *al-Waqāʾiʿ al-Miṣriyyah*, when he was in Egypt and when Sami Pasha was its manager and editor in chief, and the second being the time when he contributed to the establishment of *ar-Rāʾid al-Tūnisī* and its printing press. Then his job at the Sultanate's printing press added more to his expertise. And what encouraged him to establish *al-Jawāʾib,* even more was what he had in mind "of names of people, enterprises, local and international forces, that are welcoming of a newspaper establishment of that sort," such as Egypt's Khedive, the Tunisian minister Khaireddine Pasha, the Tunisian Khazandār, and the sectioning of British interests. In addition to those, there is the royal head of education – who was already mentioned – and, most importantly, the Grand Imam Fouad Pasha[3].

The four-paged weekly newspaper *Al-Jawāʾib* was established, and the title is plural for "al-Jaʾibah" which means breaking news. The first issue was published in May 31st, 1861, and not in July of that year as Ṭrābulsī and Al-Aẓmah had mentioned (p. 22). Days after the publication of the first issue, Sultan ʿAbdul Majīd died, and Sultan Abdul ʿAzīz took over. As a result, the second issue was specialized for this double event, and it included a brief section on predecessors

[1] To know more about this man, one can refer to: Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 35-37.
[2] Ibid, p. 84.
[3] Ibid, pp. 85-85.

and successors, and "a detailed story on the inauguration" of the second, and the inauguration speech that he gave, which includes "his rule's instructions and his Sunni will…"[1].

Ash-Shidyāq faced great challenges when establishing *Al-Jawāʾib*. Only those who worked in the domain of Journalism or tried to establish a journalistic printing press will know its difficulty, he did not have the tool or a specialized staff to do the work – be it editing, translating, or reviewing public news – along with packaging the issues and sending them to the subscribers. Plus, *Al-Jawāʾib* did not have its own printing press nor specialized people for that department[2].

***Al-Jawāʾib:* Banning , Obstruction, and Resumption**

Al-Jawāʾib was banned three times. The first time was around nine months after the first publication, and issue 36 was the last one of that first stage in its life. The reason was Ash-Shidyāq's inability to finance it, and so he stopped publishing, but then the Grand Vizier Fouad Pasha offered his help, based on an agreement between the two parties, and so the newspaper resumed its publications. Ash-Shidyāq was vocal about the source of financing and stated it clearly on the pages of his newspaper. Furthermore, after resuming the publications, his son Salīm quit his job in Tunisia, and joined his father. After things got relatively better, he went back to Tunis, and worked as a consultant for the Tunisian foreign ministry[3].

During that period, *Al-Jawāʾib* achieved great success and became the most well-known Arabic newspaper, with its own readers and subscribers, and so Ash-Shidyāq had a sense of stability. And after printing it for nine years in the Sultanate's printing press, Ash-Shidyāq went on to establish a printing press specialized for it. Many reasons prompted him to cut off the Sultanate's printing press, one being the largeness of "its publication circle" made the printing press too small for it, and another being the clash between the Sultan and the Khedive Ismaʿīl in 1869 which made it obligatory to print in the State's printing press which belongs to "the supporters" of the latter. He adds to that the financial aid that the Tunisian minister "Mustaphā al-Khaznadār" had offered him, and the managerial department that he was able to handle due to

[1] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 88-89. For more information on the content of the first issue of "Al-Jawāʾib," the places where one can find the issues, the size of its pages and its sectioning, and how the content was distributed to 4 pages, one can refer to the Ibid, pp. 88-92.

[2] Ibid, pp. 92-94. On these pages, the author mentions the logistic complications that Ash-Shidyāq faced when Ash-Shidyāq was establishing his newspaper and their impact on it.

[3] Ibid, pp. 95-97.

"his son's return from Tunisia for good, to help his father"[1]. All of these factors contributed to Ash-Shidyāq's ability to establish his own printing press.

Issue 425 from *Al-Jawāʾib* was published by the newly established printing press. Its location moved from one place to another many times until it was settled in "number 8 in front of the High Porte, at a 50 cubits distance". Furthermore, at that time, the newspaper reached its golden age, and the number of its subscribers and agents increased, and it also "subscribed to news agencies such as Reuters, Havas, and Polo, then it started publishing twice a week," and it aimed, in some of its issues, to increase the number of pages from four to eight. In addition, the printing press did not only print newspaper issues, but it also began to publish books[2], including Ash-Shidyāq's book *Al-Wāsiṭah (The Means)* and *Kashf al-Mukhabba (Revealing the Hidden)*, among others.

Al-Jawāʾib continued publishing and expanding. In 1879, the clashes between the High Porte and Egypt's Khedive Ismaʿīl worsened. Then, when the latter was expelled from his post in Egypt, *Al-Jawāʾib* refused to publish the article of the Turkish newspaper *"Tarjamān Ḥaqīqat"* in Arabic which defames him. For that reason, a decision was issued to obstruct the newspaper from publishing for six months[3]. As a result, *Al-Jawāʾib* stopped publishing, for the second time since its establishment[4].

Al-Jawāʾib's policy was to publish the latest news related to the Arab countries, even the ones that displease the High Porte. In 1884, during the outbreak of Sudan's crisis, the authorities of the printing press prohibited publishing anything about it. *Al-Jawāʾib* however, did not obey that law, and so that year, a decree was issued to permanently obstruct it from publishing. Issue 1177 was the last one to be published based on a chronological order of all the issues[5].

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[1] Ibid, pp. 100-101.
[2] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., p. 102.
[3] Ibid, p. 122; Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p. 23. For more information on the obstruction of the newspaper, one can refer to his text and the responses of "Al-Jawāʾib" to him, in Ṭrābulsī and al-Aẓmah's book on pages 405-407.
[4] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ mentions in footnote 31 from the second chapter of his book, on page 240, that "Al-Jawāʾib" was obstructed for two months in 1869 because of the Khedive Ismaʿīl, but he does not provide any additional details. If that is correct, then it means that the newspaper was obstructed three times before it was permanently banned from publishing in 1884.
[5] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., p. 124.

Conclusion

Two or three years before the permanent obstruction of *Al-Jawāʾib,* Ash-Shidyāq began to resign from working, due to his old age, and his poor eyesight. Then, *Al-Jawāʾib*'s eclipse brought a financial eclipse with it, and so Ash-Shidyāq faced financial difficulties once again[1]. Furthermore, in 1886, he visited Egypt to request a salary, and he met "Ḥasan al-Waqādah, and ministers and nobles paid him visits," and the Khedive Tawfīq Tawfīq I welcomed him and mentioned "his service to the East," but this is all he got from him. Jirjī Zaydān spread the word of the visit, and described Ash-Shidyāq as being eagerly driven at such an old age; and many researchers, including ʿAbbūd and Ṭrābulsī, noted that he still possessed his intellectual sharpness and attentiveness, his eloquence of speech, and the charm of his expressions, with a tendency towards folly[2].

Ash-Shidyāq returned to Istanbul, and his financial difficulties became an ever bigger burden. He wrote, "three weeks prior to his death," to the juridical supervisor Jawdat Pasha, telling him about his financial difficulties, and the worsening condition of his eyesight, and asking him to take the case up to the Sultan, so that he may offer him a salary. But Ash-Shidyāq's fate was "lit off" before receiving an answer. He died in September 20th, 1887[3]; and the "Sunni authorities wanted to bury him where Sultan Maḥmūd was buried, but his son Salīm requested that he be buried in Mount Lebanon, based on his will, which he was permitted to do." Furthermore, ʿAbbūd reports – based on a contemporary issue of *Lisān al-Ḥāl* newspaper – the events of the corpse's arrival to Beirut (on the morning of October 5th), on an Austrian ship, and the crowded welcoming that he was received by, and also his arrival to al-ʿUmarī Grand Mosque, where he was prayed for, and then finally the convoy that he took his body to the burial place[4], which was in Ḥazmiyyah, on the old Beirut-Damascus road, in a small cemetery known by the public as "the graves of the Pashas." He is still buried there, next to the rulers of Mount Lebanon.

[1] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., p. 126.
[2] ʿAbbūd, Marūn, *Saqr Lubnān,* op. cit., p. 90; ; Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., p. 24.
[3] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 126-127.
[4] ʿAbbūd, Marūn, *Saqr Lubnān,* op. cit., pp. 99-100.

Appendix

On the Margins of Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq's Biography

This section includes four highlights related to Ash-Shidyāq. Based on what can still be said about him and his status, we dedicated a special section for it as a margin to his biography. The first highlight is about his family, the second is about his political allegiance, and the third summarizes his stances on two cases related to Lebanon, and the fourth and last is about his debates.

The Family

Ash-Shidyāq had three sons from his first wife Wardah aṣ-Ṣūlī, and none with his British second wife, they were: Salīm (1836 – 1910), Fāyiz (1838 – 1856), and Asʿad who died in when he was just two-years-old in London, where he was also buried, during Ash-Shidyāq's residence there to work on the translation of the Bible with "Samuel Lee".

As for his eldest son Salīm, he was born in 1836 in Malta and not in 1826 in Egypt as it was mentioned by Masʿad. He died in San Remo, Italy in 1910[1] and not in London in 1906 as it was also mentioned by Masʿad. He moved between many countries including Tunisia, where he worked as a consultant for the Tunisian foreign ministry, then he went to Istanbul to help his father with editing *Al-Jawāʾib,* and when he became an independent editor under his father's supervision, the newspaper was shut down in 1884. He then moved to Egypt where he established his own newspaper. He also visited Paris, London, and Italy. He returned from Paris to Istanbul one day before his father's death. He accompanied his father's corpse on the Austrian ship that took it to Beirut. Salīm played an important role in the Ottoman politics with the men of "Turkiyya al-Fatat" (Young Turks) since he was one of them, and he was one of Khedive Ismaʿīl

[1] Hashimeh, Father Camille al-Yasou'iy, "Ash-Shidyāq, Salīm," in *al-Mo'alifoun al-Arab al-Masihiyoun min Kabl al-Islam ila Akher al-Karn al-Ishrin,* (*The Arab Christian Writers from before Islam until the End of the 20th* Century), fifth section, Beirut, Lebanon, Dar al-Mashrik, first edition, 2013. We took what was mentioned by Hashimeh and left what Masʿad mentioned in his book *Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* p.47.

Pasha and his son Tawfīq Pasha's agents. He had one daughter, Rose, who was named after his mother "Wardah" (Rose in Arabic), and she was a Muslim from a Circassian mother, whom he married in Istanbul after leaving his first wife "Safia Hanem," whose originally British and who converted to Islam prior to their marriage. His daughter Rose was left with his rich belongings, including the "literary and psychological treasures of her grandfather" Aḥmād Fāris[1].

His Political Allegiance

Ash-Shidyāq moved between many countries, and he was close to their powerful personalities whom he assisted with their state affairs. In Tunisia, he assisted Marshal Aḥmād Pasha, and he was fond of this minister Mustaphā al-Khaznadār, and the other minister Khayr Ad-Dīn Pasha, who earned the position of the Grand Imam in Istanbul in 1878. In addition to that, he also had great ties with the leaders of Egypt, such as the Khedive Ismaʿīl. He suffered a great deal during that period of his allegiance, *Al-Jawāʾib* was obstructed, as we have already mentioned. As for his allegiance to the British, he was undoubtedly fond of them, in many ways, but their politics was another issue. "He carried the British citizenship to use it against the Ottoman State since his political affiliation was with Egypt." Furthermore, *Al-Jawāʾib* was loyal to the Sultan, causing tension which resulted in the obstruction of the newspaper at times. In Islamic politics, it was devoted to "fighting for any Islamic territory or country," which was also applied to Arab matters, for it refused to publish Sutlan ʿAbdul Ḥamīd's speech during the opening of the nobles' council, "because it was published in newspapers in French and not in Arabic." So, the High Porte issued a decree ever since, that whatever is published about it must be in Arabic"[2].

Two Stances on Lebanon

In this section, we refer to two of Ash-Shidyāq's stances which reflect his boldness, foresight, commitment to his principles, and his love for Lebanon. The first stance was when he sided with Yūsuf Karam's, who was calling for the designation of a patriotic ruler as the head of the governorate, which opposed what was set by the 1861 protocol. Then, when the tenure of Dawūd Pasha I was near its end, and when it was time to reconsider whether the governor must be Lebanese or not, Yūsuf Karam became active in his request, and the tensions between him and

[1] Masʿad, Būlus, *Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., pp. 47-48. For more on the fate of the grandfather's literary "treasures," one can refer to the continuation of page 48 of this book.
[2] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., pp. 121-123.

the governorate grew stronger, which increased the pressures put on him by the state to give up and accept “a position in Dawūd Pasha’s office, if he wished to return to Lebanon.” Ash-Shidyāq then published an article in *Al-Jawāʾib* “referring in it to the turmoil in Lebanon, and its lack of true stability,” and the people’s indignation toward the ways in which the governor was handling the country’s affairs. This article had a strong influence, which forced the Governing Council to undertake procedures, to avoid its reoccurrence.” The second stance was the one he took when he visited his cousin, Patriarch Būlus Masʿad, in Istanbul, and the reconciliation that happened between the two there. In May of 1867, the Patriarch visited Rome, Paris, and Istanbul, in an attempt to fight the governor’s claim to have the right to verify the positions of the Maronite Patriarchs and Archbishop. Furthermore, in Istanbul, with the help of Ash-Shidyāq, Masʿad was able to meet with the Sultan who gave him a thin medal. During the meeting of Ash-Shidyāq and the Patriarch – which was reported by Yūsuf Ibrāhīm Yazbeck and mentioned by Ṭrābulsī and al-Aẓmah in their books – the former affirmed that he was not pleased with what Patriarch Ḥubaysh had done to his brother Asʿad, and the latter affirmed that he was no longer ashamed of being a Christian Maronite.

The Debates

Ash-Shidyāq was known for loving debates. He has had debates with his times’ well-known intellects, which included verbal abuse and personal offense in many topics. We shall mention three of the debates; the first with Archbishop Aathanasius al-Tutunjī, the second with Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Yazajī, and the third with “Barjīs Paris.”

The first debate was during Ash-Shidyāq’s work in the translation of some of the missionaries’ religious books, which were reverberating among the missionaries in Malta, and among their leaders in London and Gibraltar. This represents the first of the many debates between him and his antagonists. It resulted in prohibiting him from translating, only for the missionaries to reassign him due to his unrivalled linguistic skills. Furthermore, the second debate which was between him and Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Yazijī, and which one among his most prominent debates, had many of the Arab intellectuals take part in it, to the point where they were divided into two groups: the Shidyāq’s and the Yazijī’s. “The Shidyāq party” included: Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Aḥdab, Shaykh Yūsuf al-Asīr, Shaykh ʿAbdul Hādī Najā al-Abyārī, Mikhāʾīl ʿAbdul Sayyid, Salīm

Nawfal, among others. As for the “The Yazijī party,” it included: Buṭrus al-Bustānī and his son Salīm, Saʿīd ash-Shartūnī, among others. A lot was written about this debate, and it might be that the last to write about it was “Amīn Nakhlah in 1958 in his book *Al-Ḥarakah al-Lughawiyyah fi Lubnān (The Linguistic Movement in Lebanon).*

Finally, we have come to the third debate which took place in the “Barjīs Paris” magazine established by Shaykh Roshaid al-Dahdah in Paris, at it is claimed by some, “but Ash-Shidyāq mentions in his letter to Shaykh Yūsuf al-Assir that the owner of the magazine is Soleiman al-Harayiri,” who is originally from Tunisia. It incessantly promoted French politics in Algeria, and libeling “the upper state, and even the rest of the Muslim states”[1]. Furthermore, in 1858, it promoted Napoleon III’s project which consisted of creating a princedom in Syria, headed by Prince Abdel Qader al-Jaza’iri[2]. Ash-Shidyāq revolted against “Barjīs” in his newspaper *Al-Jawāʾib*, and many of the great writers of his time sided with him, including Shaykh Yūsuf al-Asīr, Ibrāhīm al-Aḥdab, Naʿmān al-Allūsī, and many others. Ash-Shidyāq kept boasting about his revolt against this magazine until the last day of his life; he even mentioned it in his last letter, written three weeks before his death, to Jawdat Pasha[3].

[1] Ibid, pp. 114-115.
[2] Ṭrābulsī, Fawwāz, and al-Aẓmah ʿAzīz, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq,* op. cit., pp. 20-21.
[3] Aṣ-Ṣulḥ, ʿImād, *Aḥmād Fāris Ash-Shidyāq, Athāruh wa ʿAṣruh,* op. cit., p.115.